



EHMHA Membership Meeting

February 15, 2026 7:00PM

Todd Hunter Room, East Hants Sportsplex

Board Member Attendees: Greg Heard, Tyson Spencer, Evan Taylor, James Thompson, Gus Smith, Mike Norris, Katie Muise

Regrets: Brett Garden

Hockey Nova Scotia Representative Attendees: Garth Isenor

Membership Attendees: See attached

1. Welcome and Approval of Agenda by Greg Heard

Approved

- Welcome and introductions. Special Guest: Garth Isenor (Hockey Nova Scotia)

2. President Update by Greg Heard in President Brett Garden's absence.

- Safety was noted as a top priority. The association remains committed to maintaining a safe environment within EHMHA, and members and coaches were encouraged to continue having conversations around safety.
- The First Shift program was successful, with 26 new players registered as a result of this program. Thanks were extended to volunteers and to Jenn for her assistance with registration. An application has been submitted to host the program again next season.
- Upcoming board positions were noted. Members were encouraged to consider stepping forward, with an emphasis on welcoming fresh perspectives and new ideas.
- U11C Black was recognized for bringing home a new banner. Congratulations were extended.

3. VP Admin Update by Greg Heard

- Membership payments were reported to be nearly complete, with less than 1% remaining outstanding. Appreciation was extended to team managers and treasurers for their efforts. The importance of maintaining cash flow as a non-profit organization was noted.

4. VP Hockey Update by Tyson Spencer

- With extra ice time available, additional ice time was provided to rec teams, as well as Friday evening two-line games. Attendance was strong and the environment was positive.
- U7 Friday skates were reported to be at full capacity and running well.

- Tom Hunter skates were reported to be continuing, with sufficient registration to support two additional groups.
- Concerns were noted regarding the clock expiring while time remained on the ice. It was clarified that this is a Central Minor rule that remains in effect during playoffs and is not a Sportsplex rule.
- It was noted that Major Bantam and any teams participating in checking are required to complete a checking clinic. It was further noted that a checking clinic will be offered in March.
- Two incidents at the arena were reported, including a player touching the Zamboni and a puck being thrown onto the ice. These situations were addressed by the coaching staff. As a result, the Sportsplex has implemented a policy that players are not permitted on the benches while the Zamboni is on the ice.
- Ice allocation was discussed as the season comes to an end. Teams were noted to have varying amounts of remaining ice time based on their budgets. Les is currently determining the remaining ice time for each team. An email will be sent to team managers outlining what is available.

5. **Events & Tournament Update** by Evan Taylor

- An update was provided on the Bannister Jamboree. Appreciation was extended to the volunteers for their significant contributions.
- Preparation for the Ettinger-Smith Tournament is progressing well, with Mariah Sokolic acknowledged for her extensive efforts across multiple areas. Over 80 teams are expected to participate. Continued volunteer support is needed, and members were encouraged to get involved.
- Tournament swag is in progress. A table will be set up at the events, and James presented samples.

6. **Finance Update** by James Thompson

- An update was provided on the transition to Scotiabank in the first year. Some initial challenges were noted; however, the process is expected to improve moving forward. It was noted that for the upcoming season, managers and treasurers moving to new teams can be easily transferred between accounts.
- An update was provided on the new 50/50 system, with our association noted as the first to implement this new GrayJay feature. Some initial learning experiences were noted; however, credits are now being applied to accounts promptly. The association is also working with other associations as a referral and anticipates broader adoption of GrayJay. GrayJay was acknowledged as a strong partner.
- TV Bingo is continuing on Wednesdays and Thursdays in the evenings on Eastlink Cable Channel 10. Sales were noted to vary depending on vendors, with some locations performing better than others. Some decline in participation was also noted due to competing TV bingo offerings. MK has been calling the numbers. It is anticipated that the program will continue through the summer.

- A question was raised regarding whether the program can be live streamed. It was clarified that access is available through Eastlink only, and no fees are charged as the association is a non-profit organization.
- The cost of hockey was discussed, with recognition that not all families have the means to participate. It was noted that 18 families were supported this season through the Don Garden and Bannister programs. Appreciation was extended for these contributions.
- The association's non-profit status and positive partnership with the rink were noted as contributing to efforts to reduce costs. It was discussed that any year-end surplus may be used to offer scholarships to players, in partnership with HERH, with potential scholarships of \$1,000. Appreciation was extended to the municipality for its support in helping to lower costs.
- A question was raised regarding when unexpected fees from Scotiabank would be reimbursed. It was advised that the review process may take a couple of weeks, as all accounts are being examined. It was noted that accounts are not expected to incur fees.
- Appreciation was extended to Evan and his teams for their work on the tournaments. It was noted that, as a non-profit organization, the goal is to ensure events remain financially sustainable. Fundraising efforts were highlighted, with approximately \$30,000 allocated toward ice costs. Tournament registration fees were increased by \$10, bringing the total to \$1,000 per team, which was noted to remain competitive.

7. Q&A/Open Discussion

Board Positions - A question was raised regarding upcoming board positions. It was noted that positions include President, Vice President, and Secretary, and members were encouraged to review full details online.

HNS Engagement and Member Concerns

- Garth Isenor from Hockey Nova Scotia noted that a higher volume of complaints has been received from East Hants compared to other associations.
- Hockey Nova Scotia will be hosting an information session at 6:30 PM next Sunday to provide an opportunity for members to raise concerns and be heard. Members were encouraged to attend and share feedback. It was noted that while not all concerns may receive immediate responses, they will be reviewed and brought forward as appropriate. Communication will be shared with membership.
- Concerns were raised regarding comfort in speaking up. It was clarified that board members will not be in attendance and that members will not be reprimanded for participating. It was acknowledged that if individuals feel uncomfortable speaking, this is a concern that needs to be addressed.

Board Accountability and Policies - A question was raised regarding whether board members are subject to the same disciplinary rules and policies as general members. It was confirmed that all individuals are expected to follow the same policies.

Meeting Minutes and Transparency - Concerns were raised regarding the availability of board meeting minutes. It was noted that minutes have not been consistently posted. Members expressed concerns regarding transparency and indicated that multiple requests had been made for information, including minutes from the November membership meeting. It was noted that improved documentation and timely posting of minutes may help reduce concerns.

Rules, Processes, and AP (Affiliate Player) Policy - Questions were raised regarding rules and their application, including the AP call-up process. It was noted that current regulations are governed externally and may be subject to review. It was further noted that where regulations have become unclear or frequently amended, a full review and rewrite may be required. This topic is scheduled for discussion at Hockey Nova Scotia Minor Council, where potential revisions may be considered. Additional clarification was provided regarding AP eligibility and high school participation.

Neutrality and Handling of Concerns - A question was raised regarding the involvement of neutral or external parties. It was noted that all associations operate under the same rules, and the focus is on understanding and addressing concerns locally. Concerns regarding accountability were raised. It was noted that concerns will be reviewed and discussed with the executive as appropriate.

Communication and Responsiveness - Concerns were raised regarding communication, including delays in responses to emails and follow-ups. It was acknowledged that e-mail volume can be high, and members were encouraged to follow up if needed. Further concerns were raised regarding overall communication and members' comfort in raising issues. It was noted that improved processes and communication may be required.

Governance and Administrative Support - Questions were raised regarding the potential for additional support roles, including administrative or paid positions, to assist with workload and accountability. It was noted that this could be considered at the AGM, with input from membership, as it may have implications for fees.

Financial Position and Use of Funds - A question was raised regarding the association's financial position. It was noted that registration costs were reduced this season and that funds have been allocated toward jerseys and other expenses. The goal remains to operate a balanced budget. It was further noted that more detailed financial information will be available at the AGM, including potential year-end surplus and initiatives such as scholarship programs.

Programs and Player Development - Questions and feedback were provided regarding player development, including concerns about skill gaps in two-line play, integration of First Shift players, and overall team progression. Suggestions included exploring alternative formats, additional development opportunities, and improved integration strategies for new players.

Coaching and Mentorship - Questions were raised regarding coach development and support. It was noted that coaching meetings were held earlier in the season, though attendance was limited. Suggestions included offering additional workshops, mentorship opportunities, and shared resources to support coaches throughout the season.

Ice Allocation and Format of Play - Questions were raised regarding the use of ice time, including the potential for surveys to gather member feedback and consideration of alternative formats such as half-ice vs. full-ice play. It was noted that cost and allocation factors would need to be considered in future planning.

Team Structure and Player Placement - Questions were raised regarding team composition and structure, including balancing skill levels and the number of teams at various divisions. It was noted that these decisions are influenced by registration numbers and skill distribution, which may vary year to year.

Programs and Offerings - A follow-up question was raised regarding scheduling conflicts related to Tom Hunter programs. Concerns were noted regarding limited attendance due to conflicts and lack of response to follow-up communication. It was suggested that processes may need to be reviewed to improve communication and scheduling.

Equipment and Resources - A question was raised regarding equipment for coaches. It was noted that grant funding has supported approximately \$3,500 in new equipment, with additional items donated. A request was made for coaching resources such as playbooks or draw boards. This will be followed up on.

Tryouts, Releases, and Player Movement Between Associations - Questions were raised regarding releases, tryout eligibility, and player movement between associations. It was noted that releases are typically granted on a one-year basis, after which players are expected to return to their home association unless appropriate levels are not available. Additional clarification from Hockey Nova Scotia is forthcoming.

Future Programs and Teams - Questions were raised regarding potential future teams and offerings, including U13 AAA and U18 A programs. It was noted that these are dependent on registration numbers, skill level, and available ice time, and may be considered in future planning.

Membership Members Present:

Members:

Chris Doucet
Cory Jean
Crystal Sutherland
Rebekah Jeffries
Krystal Kristiansen
Joey Maclean Foster
Corey Cole
Courtney Cole
Ashley Brine
Mariah Allison
Brent Smith
Catherine Bussey
Jessica Mann
Graeme Mahoney
Debbie Ratcliffe
Brian Ratcliffe
Lindsey Day
Adam Day
Natasha Fraser
Chandell MacKeil
Travis MacKeil
Andrea Lavery
Scott Ross
Mike Rankin
Lauren Ashley
Amelia Pennington
Natalie Power
Jennifer LeFrense

